

Preamble. WHEREAS, at a meeting of the commissioners appointed by the general assemblies of the commonwealth of Virginia and the state of Maryland, for forming a compact between the two states, to regulate and settle the jurisdiction and navigation of Patowmack, Pocomoke rivers, and that part of Chesapeake bay which lieth within the territory of Virginia, to wit: George Mason and Alexander Henderson, Esquires, on the part of the commonwealth of Virginia, and Daniel of Saint Thomas Jenifer, Thomas Stone and Samuel Chase, Esquires, on the part of the state of Maryland, at Mount Vernon, in Virginia, on the twenty-eighth day of March, in the year one thousand seven hundred and eighty-five, the following compact was mutually agreed to by the said commissioners. First, The commonwealth of Virginia disclaims all right to impose any toll, duty or charge, prohibition or restraint, on any vessel whatever sailing through the capes of Chesapeake bay to the state of Maryland, or from the said state through the said capes outward bound, and agrees that the waters of Chesapeake bay, and the river Pocomoke, within the limits of Virginia, be forever considered as a common highway, free for the use and navigation of any vessel belonging to the said state of Maryland, or any of its citizens, or carrying on commerce to or from the said state, or with any of its citizens, and that any such vessel, inward or outward bound, may freely enter any of the rivers within the commonwealth of Virginia as a harbour, or for safety against an enemy, without the payment of port duties, or any other charge; and also that the before-mentioned parts of Chesapeake and Pocomoke river be free for the navigation of vessels from one port of the state of Maryland to another. Second, The state of Maryland agrees, that any vessel belonging to the commonwealth of Virginia, or any of its citizens, or carrying on commerce to or from the said commonwealth, or with any of its citizens, may freely enter any of the rivers of the said state of Maryland as a harbour, or for safety against an enemy, without the payment of any port duty, or any other charge. Third, Vessels of war, the property of either state, shall not be subject to the payment of any port duty, or other charge. Fourth, Vessels not exceeding forty feet keel, nor fifty tons burthen, the property of any citizen of Virginia or Maryland, or of citizens of both states, trading from one state to the other only, and having on board only the produce of the said states, may enter and trade in any part of either state, with a permit from the naval officer of the district from which such vessel departs with her cargo, and shall be subject to no port charges. Fifth, All merchant vessels (except such as are described in the fourth article) navigating the river Patowmack, shall enter and clear at some naval office on the said river in one or both states, according to the laws of the state in